

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 16, 2012

Agenda Item: Statewide Fisheries Management Plan

Division: Fish and Wildlife (Fisheries)

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

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Background

The Fisheries Bureau is preparing to develop a statewide fisheries management plan. The plan will identify the Department's overarching goals and direction for the core fisheries programs, including fish management, aquatic habitat, fishing access and angling opportunities. At a watershed scale, the plan will establish the management direction for each waterbody under Department authority, the management objectives for the fish found in the waterbody, and any special considerations or management issues that apply. The plan will also provide the public with an overview on the laws, rules and policies that affect fisheries management and the framework for decision-making and project priority setting. The plan will also provide guidance to the Department and the FWP Commission in the development of future policies and regulations. Although the Bureau is still in the early stages of designing the planning process, the goal is to propose a final plan to the Commission within 12-18 months. The longevity of the plan is expected to be 10 years with a review after 5 years.

Public Involvement Process & Results

It is important that the public has opportunities to engage in the planning process. The Bureau anticipates that this will include public meetings to gather information for the plan and to gauge public support. The Bureau will also seek input from the various groups, organizations and other entities with an interest in fisheries management, e.g. the Angler's Forum, conservation groups, and the regional citizen advisory committees. The Bureau anticipates having a web page dedicated to the planning process that will provide regular updates, meeting information, draft material for review, and the ability for people to provide comments online. The public will also have an opportunity to speak to the Commission on the issue during informational sessions or when staff proposes draft and final versions of the plan.

Alternatives and Analysis

The Bureau could continue without a statewide fish management plan. This alternative is not preferred. A statewide plan offers the public a better opportunity to affect, understand, and support the management direction and priorities for fisheries management.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

The statewide plan will help the Bureau to achieve the core fisheries programs and enhance public understanding and support for these efforts.

Proposed Motion

None requested at this time.